

SUCCESS STORY

CUSTOM MICROWAVE INC

Manufacturer's Edge

"As we go through this journey, there will be a lot of ups and downs and we'll need to fall back on our core values. Tom Bugnitz and Manufacturer's Edge have been instrumental in helping us craft a foundation for growth." Clency Lee-Yow, President

REDEFINING HOW TO SERVE THE SATELLITE INDUSTRY

ABOUT. Custom Microwave, Inc. (CMi) builds high performance radio frequency components and antennae feeds for commercial projects, space exploration, and the military. The Longmont, Colorado-based company employs approximately 25 people.

THE CHALLENGE. Custom Microwave has seen exponential growth over the past decade. And, while that growth is exciting and inspires them to continue expanding, CMi also realized that they would eventually need to take a step back, reevaluate, reassess, and establish a firm foundation before any further growth would be possible. Simultaneously, CMi is facing a number of external challenges as well. Chief among them being roadblocks from various government policies, such as the de-authorization of loans from the Export-Import Bank that, CMi estimates, cost them approximately \$5M in potential sales. This is especially disconcerting given the fact that, prior to the de-authorization, 60% of the work that CMi had done in the previous 5 years was made possible by low interest loans from the Ex-Im Bank.

MEP'S ROLE. Custom Microwave learned about the programs offered by Manufacturer's Edge, a NIST MEP affiliate, and benefitted greatly from instruction in Lean, Visual Process Mapping, and 5S. Over time, however, they felt the effects of the training they received start to fade and felt they were slipping back into old habits. When CMi decided to re-invest in their future and start building a new, more solid foundation, they knew immediately that they needed to solicit help from Manufacturer's Edge. This time they wanted something they knew would stick -- something that they would adhere to permanently. Thus, a unique arrangement was made whereby Manufacturer's Edge has been effectively embedded within the organization in order to provide in-depth, hands-on coaching, training/implementation, and policy deployment. Together, they have crafted a focused mission statement, an ambitious 2020 vision, a competitive strategy, specific core goals, and detailed 1-year and 5-year action plans. Their main focus moving forward will be to reduce lead-time and cost while also continuing to expand their offerings. One of the main goals of their 5-year plan is to start designing and building complete antenna systems. As evidence of their hard work and diligence, CMi can already report that in the first month of the first year of their 5-year plan, they are well on their way having just won their first bid on an antenna system. If this trajectory continues and they are able to capture even 10% of the market with their added services and newly reinforced foundation, they will be able to weather any storm or roadblock thrown their way.



RESULTS



\$6,000,000 in increased/retained sales



\$200,000 in cost savings



20 new/retained jobs

NEXT STEPS



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